Amendment "D" to Accompany Request for Continued Examination

Please withdraw claims 45, 47, 53 and 63, without prejudice. The status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1-36 (cancelled).

Claim 37 (previously presented). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:

excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;

forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the concrete slab;

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion; and

prior to the excavating, driving plural sheet piles to define an inner perimeter and an outer perimeter for the continuous concrete slab to thereby place the first and second portions in general vertical alignment with one another.

Claim 38 (previously presented). The method of claim 37, and further comprising:

driving plural sheet piles downward from the second portion to further define the inner and outer perimeters;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the second portion of the concrete slab; and

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that the essentially continuous concrete slab has a third portion which is below and spaced-apart from the second portion.

Claim 39 (previously presented). The method of claim 37, and wherein the soil is excavated using a water jetting process.

Claim 40 (previously presented). The method of claim 37, and wherein the second portion of the concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of the concrete slab, and the first and second portions are defined by a continuous outer perimeter and a continuous inner perimeter, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a wall element at one of the inner or outer perimeters.

Claim 41 (previously presented). The method of claim 40, and wherein the wall element is a first wall element, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a second wall element at the other of the inner or outer perimeters.

Claim 42 (previously presented). The method of claim 41, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

Claim 43 (previously presented). The method of claim 42, and further comprising placing a top over the closed inner area.

Claim 44 (previously presented). The method of claim 37, and further comprising forming generally aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing excavated soil by passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

Claim 45 (withdrawn). The method of claim 44, and further comprising:

placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab; and

filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson with a fill material.

Claim 46 (previously presented). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:

excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;

forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the concrete slab;

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion; and

forming generally aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing excavated soil by passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

Claim 47 (withdrawn). The method of claim 46, and further comprising:

placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab; and

filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson with a fill material.

(Continued on next page.)

Claim 48 (previously presented). The method of claim 46, and wherein the soil is excavated using a water jetting process.

Claim 49 (previously presented). The method of claim 46, and wherein the second portion of the concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of the concrete slab, and the first and second portions are defined by a continuous outer perimeter and a continuous inner perimeter, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a wall element at one of the inner or outer perimeters.

Claim 50 (previously presented). The method of claim 49, and wherein the wall element is a first wall element, the method further comprising joining the first and second portions with a second wall element at the other of the inner or outer perimeters.

Claim 51 (previously presented). The method of claim 50, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

Claim 52 (previously presented). The method of claim 51, and further comprising placing a top over the closed inner area.

Claim 53 (withdrawn). The method of claim 46, and wherein the concrete slab defines a plurality of concrete flights defined by an inner perimeter and an outer perimeter, the method further comprising attaching wall panels to at least one of the inner perimeter or the outer perimeter of the concrete slab while forming a roof over the concrete slab.

Claim 54 (previously presented). A method of fabricating a subterranean structure, comprising:

excavating soil to form a downward sloping ramp;

forming a concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp;

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the concrete slab;

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that a subterranean structure is formed having an essentially continuous concrete slab with a first portion which is above and spaced-apart from a second portion, wherein the second portion of the concrete slab is generally in alignment with the first portion of the concrete slab, and wherein the first and second portions are defined by a continuous outer perimeter and a continuous inner perimeter, and;

after at least some of the second portion of the concrete slab has been formed, providing a wall element to join the first and second portions of the concrete slab at one of the inner or outer perimeters.

Claim 55 (cancelled).

Claim 56 (previously presented). The method of claim 54, and wherein the wall element is formed using at least one of cast concrete, or sprayed concrete.

(Continued on next page.)

Claim 57 (previously presented). The method of claim 54 wherein the wall element is a first wall element, the method further comprising:

joining the first and second portions of the concrete slab with the first wall element at the inner perimeter; and

joining the first and second portions of the concrete slab with a second wall element at the outer perimeter, wherein the first wall element and the second wall element are not provided until after the first and second portions of the concrete slab have been formed.

Claim 58 (previously presented). The method of claim 57, wherein:

the first wall element defines at least a portion of an inner caisson; and

the second wall element defines at least a portion of an outer caisson.

Claim 59 (previously presented). The method of claim 57, wherein at least one of the first and second wall elements is formed using at least one of cast concrete, or sprayed concrete.

Claim 60 (previously presented). The method of claim 57, and wherein the inner perimeter defines a closed inner area of the subterranean structure, the method further comprising excavating soil out of the closed inner area.

Claim 61 (previously presented). The method of claim 60, and further comprising placing a top over the closed inner area.

Claim 62 (previously presented). The method of claim 54, and further comprising forming generally aligned holes in the first and second portions, and removing excavated soil by passing it upwards through the generally aligned holes.

Claim 63 (withdrawn). The method of claim 62, and further comprising:

placing a caisson liner through the generally aligned holes to define a caisson between the first and second portions of the essentially continuous concrete slab; and

filling the space between the first and second portions outside of the caisson with a fill material.

Claim 64 (previously presented). The method of claim 54, and wherein the soil is excavated using a water jetting process.

Claim 65 (previously presented). The method of claim 54, and further comprising:

continuing to excavate soil to extend the downward sloping ramp to a location under the second portion of the concrete slab; and

continuing to form the concrete slab on the downward sloping ramp so that the essentially continuous concrete slab has a third portion which is below and spaced-apart from the second portion.

(End of Amendment "C".)

(Continued on next page.)